

Harding Pleads Cause of Ship Subsidy Measure in Message Before Special Session of Congress

Chief Executive of United States Hurls Down Gauntlet to American Lawmakers as He Flays Inaction in Merchant Marine Bill in Spirited Speech; President Points Out Heavy Losses Suffered by Nation When Old Glory Was Plunged Into World Conflict; Speaker Urges Congressmen to Enact Legislation That Will Pave Way to Yankees' Domination in World Commerce and Will Relieve the Treasury of Great Drain to Which It Has Been Subjected in Past Few Years.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 21.—(By U. P.)—In his message to the extraordinary session of congress today, President Harding said in part:

Members of Congress: "Late last February I reported to you, relative to the American merchant marine and recommended legislation which the executive branch of the government deemed essential to promote our national welfare and with it our national defense. Other problems were pressing and other questions pending and for one reason or another which needs not be rectified, the suggested legislation has not progressed beyond a favorable recommendation by the house committee. The committee has given the question a full and painstaking inquiry and study and I hope that a favorable report speedily will be given the force of law.

"It will be helpful in clearing the atmosphere if we start with the frank recognition of divided opinion and determined opposition. It is not new experience. Like proposals have divided the congress on various previous occasions. Perhaps a more resolute hostility never was met before, and I am very sure the need for decisive action—decisive, favorable action—never was so urgent before.

Grim Actuality. "We are not now dealing with a policy founded on theory, we have a problem which is one of grim actuality. We are facing insistent conditions out of which will come either additional and staggering government losses and national impotence on the seas, or else the unfurling of the flag on a great American merchant marine commensurate with our commercial position, to serve as carrier of our cargoes in peace and meet the necessities of our defense in war. There is no thought here and now to magnify the relation of a merchant marine to our national defense. It is enough to recall that we have lost the command of the seas almost wholly dependent on our allies for transportation by sea. We expended approximately \$3,000,000,000, feverishly, extravagantly, wastefully, and impractically. Out of our eagerness, we builded and otherwise acquired the merchant fleet which the government owns today.

"In the simplest way I can say it, our immediate problem is not to build and support a merchant shipping, which I hold to be one of the highest and most worthy aspirations of any great people, our problem is to deal with what we now possess. Our problem is to relieve the public treasury of the drain it is already meeting. Let us omit particulars about the frenzied war-time building. Possibly we did fully build what could have been done in the anxious circumstances.

Vital Relationship. "Let us pass for the moment the vital relationship between a merchant marine and a commercially aspiring nation. Aye, let us suppose for a moment the absurdity that with one \$3,000,000,000 experience, and with the astronomical costs in lives and the treasure which may be chargeable to our inability promptly to apply our potency—which God forbid happening again—let us momentarily ignore all of these and turn to note the mere business problem, the practical question of dollars and cents with which we are confronted.

"The war construction and the later completion of war contracts, where completion was believed to be the greater economy to the public treasury, left us approximately 18,000,000 gross tons in ships. The figures are nearer 12,000,000 tons now, owing to the scrapping of the wooden fleet. More than half this tonnage is government owned, and approximately 2,250,000 tons are under government operation in one form or another. The net loss to the United States treasury—sums actually taken there from in this government operation—averaged approximately \$16,000,000 per month during the year prior to the assumption of responsibility by the present administration. A constant warfare on this loss of public funds and the draft to service of capable business management and experienced operating directors, have resulted in applied efficiency and enforced economy. It is very gratifying to report the diminution of the losses to \$4,000,000 a month or a total of \$50,000,000 a year; but it is intolerable that the government should continue a policy from which so enormous a treasury loss is the inevitable outcome.

"This loss, moreover, attends operation of less than a third of the government owned fleet. "It is not, therefore, a question of adding new treasury burdens to maintain our shipping; we are paying these burdens now. It is not a question of contracting an outlay to support our merchant shipping, because we are paying already. I am not asking your authorization of a new and added draft on the public treasury; I am appealing for a program to diminish the burden we are already bearing.

Reduced by Change. "When your executive government knows of public expenditures aggregating \$50,000,000 annually which it believes could be reduced by itself through a change of policy, your government would be unworthy of public trust if such a change were not commended; nay, if it were not insistently urged.

"And the pity of it is that our present expenditure in losses is not constructive. It looks to no future attainments. It is utterly ineffective in the establishment of a dependable merchant marine, whereas the encouragement of private ownership and the application of individual initiative would make for a permanent creation, ready and answerable at all times to the needs of the nation.

Losses Are There. "But I have not properly portrayed all the current losses to the

public treasury. We are wearing out our ships without any prospect for replacement. We are having these losses through deterioration now, and are charging nothing against our capital account. But the losses are there and regretfully larger under government operation than under private control. Only a few years of continued losses on capital account will make these losses through depreciation alone to exceed the \$50,000,000 a year now drawn to cover losses in operation.

"The glory picture of losses does not even there. Notwithstanding the known war cost of \$3,000,000,000 for the present tonnage, I will not venture to appraise its cash value today.

"When the question is asked, why the inaction for the merchant marine act now? the answer is apparent. Waiting every inspiration which lies in a constructive plan for maintaining our flag on the commercial highways of the seas, waiting the prudence in safeguarding against another \$3,000,000,000 madness if war ever again impels, we have the unavoidable task of wiping out a \$50,000,000 annual loss in operation and losses aggregating many hundreds of millions in war-torn, sacrificed, or scrapped shipping. Then the supreme humiliation, the admission that the United States—our America, once eminent among the maritime nations of the world—is incapable of asserting itself in the peace triumphs on the seas of the world.

"It would seem to me doubly humiliating when we own the ships and fail in the genius and capacity to turn their prowess towards the marts of the world.

No Longer Ignored. "This problem cannot longer be ignored, its attempted solution cannot longer be postponed. The failure of congress to act decisively will be to less disastrous than adverse action.

"Three courses of action are possible, and the choice among them is no longer to be avoided. "The first is constructive—enact the pending bill, under which I firmly believe an American merchant marine, privately owned and privately operated, but serving all the people and always available to the government in any emergency, may be established and maintained.

"The second, is obstructive—continue government operations and discourage private enterprise by government competition, under which losses are met by the public treasury, and witness the continued losses and deterioration until the colossal failure ends in sheer exhaustion.

"The third is destructive—involving the sacrifice of our ships abroad or the scrapping of them at home, the surrender of our aspirations and the confession of our impotence to the world in general and our humiliation before the competing world in particular.

"A choice among the three is inevitable. It is unbelievable that the American people or the congress which expresses their power will consent to surrender and destruction.

Subsidy Opposed. "I have come to urge the constructive alternative, to reassure the American will. I have come to ask you to relieve the responsible administration branch of the government from a program upon which failure and helplessness and staggering losses are written for every page, and let us turn to a program of assured shipping to serve us in war and to give guaranty to our commercial independence in peace.

"I know full well the hostility in the popular mind to the word 'subsidy.' It is stressed by the opposition and associated with 'special privilege' for those who are unfailing advocates of government aid whenever vast numbers are directly concerned. 'Government aid' would be a fairer term than 'subsidy' in defining what we are seeking to do for our merchant marine, and the interests are those of all the people, even though the aid goes to the few who serve.

Fair Term. "If government aid is a fair term—and I think it is—to apply to authorization aggregating \$75,000,000 to promote gainful roads for market highways, it is equally fit to be applied to the establishment and maintenance of American market highways on the salted seas. If government aid is the proper designation for 15 to 40 millions annually expended to improve and maintain inland waterways in aid of commerce, it is a proper designation for a needed assistance to establish and maintain ocean highways where there is actual commerce to be carried.

Hopes to Save. "But call it 'subsidy,' since there are those who prefer to appeal to mistaken prejudice rather than to make frank and logical argument. We might so call the annual loss of \$50,000,000 which we are paying now without protest by those who most abhor, we might as well call that a 'subsidy,' if so, I am proposing to cut it in half, approximately, and to the saving this effected there would be added millions upon millions of further savings through ending loss on capital account—government capital, out of the public treasury, always remembered—and there would be at least the promise and the prospect of the permanent establishment of the needed merchant marine.

Save Treasury. "I challenge every insinuation of favored interests and the enrichment of the special few at the expense of the public treasury. I am, first of all, appealing to save the treasury. Perhaps the unlimited bestowal of the government aid might justify the apprehension of special favoring, but the pending bill, the first ever proposed which carries such a provision, automatically guards against enrichment or perpetuated bestowal. Though differing in detail, it is

not more in proportion to their population and capacity than other great nations have done in aiding the establishment of their merchant marine, and it is timely to recall that we gave them our commerce to aid in their rebuilding, while the American flag now is to uphold and establish in the face of their most active competition. Indeed, the American development will have to overcome every obstacle which may be put in our path, except as international comity forbids. Concern about our policy is not limited to our shores, though the interest abroad is of every differing character. I hope it is timely to say, because it must be said, the maritime nations of the world are in complete accord with the opposition here to the pending measure. They have a perfect right to such an attitude. When we look from their viewpoints we can understand. But we wish to stress the American viewpoint.

Our should be the viewpoint from which one sees American commerce. The dependence of American commerce, and American vessels for American reliance in the event of war. Some of the costly lessons of war must be learned again and again, but our shipping lesson here is that the world was not so costly to be effected from the memory of this or future generations.

Discusses Permit. "Not so many months ago the head of a company operating a fleet of ships under our flag called at the executive offices to discuss a permit to transfer his fleet of cargo vessels to a foreign flag, though he meant to continue them in a distinctly American service. He based his request for transfer on the allegation that by such a transfer he could reduce his labor cost one sufficient to provide a profit on capital invested. I do not vouch for the accuracy of the statement, nor mean to discuss it. The allusion is made to recall that in good conscience congress has created by law conditions surrounding labor on American ships which are the direct result of over declare result in higher costs of operation under our flag.

"I sincerely rejoice if higher standards for labor on American ships have been established. Merest justice suggests that when congress fixes these standards, it is fair to expect government aid in maintaining them until world competition is brought to the same high level, or until our shipping lines are so firmly established that they can face world competition alone.

Doubts Uttered. "Having discussed in detail the policy and provisions of the pending bill when previously addressing you, I forbear a repetition now. In individual exchanges of opinion, not a few in house or senate have expressed personal sympathy with the purposes of the bill, and the utterance of a discouraging doubt about the sentiment of their constituencies.

"It would be most discouraging if a measure of such transcending national importance must have its fate depend on geographical, occupational, professional, or partisan objections. Frankly, I think it loftier statesmanship to support and commend a policy designed to effect the larger good to the nation than merely to record the too hasty impressions of a constituency. Out of the harmonized aspirations, the fully informed convictions, and the united efforts of all the people will come the greater republic, commercial eminence on the seas, ample agencies for the promotion and carrying on of our foreign commerce, and the people of Mississippi and the Missouri valley, the great northwest, and the Rocky Mountain states, then to the seaboard states and industrial communities building inland a thousand miles or more.

"It is a common cause with its benefits commonly shared. When people fail in the national viewpoint, and we in the confines of community selfishness or narrowness, the sun of this republic will have passed its meridian, and our larger aspirations will shrivel in the approaching twilight.

Account Diminished. "But let us momentarily put aside the aspiring and inspiring viewpoint the blunt, indisputable fact of the loss of \$50,000,000 a year under government operation remains; likewise the fast diminishing capital account, the enormous war expenditure, to which we were forced because we had not fittingly encouraged and builded as our commerce expanded in peace. Here are facts to deal with, not fancies wrought out of our political and economic disputes. The abolition of the annual loss and the best salvage of the capital account are of concern to all the people.

"It is my firm belief that the combined savings of operating losses and the protection of the capital account through more advantageous sales of our war-built, or war-sold ships, because of the favoring policy which the pending bill will establish will more than pay every dollar expended in government aid for 25 years to come.

New Expenditure. "It should be kept in mind that the approximate sum of \$5,000,000 annually paid for the transport of ocean mail is now new expenditure. It should be kept in mind that the loan fund to encourage building is not new; it is the law already, enacted by the essentially unanimous vote of congress. It is only included in the pending bill in order to amend so as to assure the execution of a minimum interest rate by the government, whereas the existing law leaves the grant of building loans subject to any whim of favoritism. It should be kept in mind, also, that there are assured limitations of the government aid proposed. The direct aid, with ocean carrying maintained at our present participation, will not reach \$20,000,000 a year, and the maximum direct aid, if our shipping is so promoted that we carry one-half our deep seas

commerce, will not exceed \$30,000,000 annually. At the very maximum of outlay we should be saving \$20,000,000 of our present annual operating loss. If the maximum is ever reached, the establishment of our merchant marine will have been definitely regarded and the government-owned fleet fortunately liquidated.

Needed For Defense. "From this point of view it is the simple, incontestable wisdom of businesslike dealing to save all that is possible of the annual loss and the millions sure to be lost to the government's capital account in sacrificing our fleet. But there is a bigger, broader, more inspiring viewpoint, aye, a patriotic viewpoint of today, which offers the only dependable promise of making our war-time inheritance of ships the foundation of a great agency of commerce in peace and an added guaranty of service when it is necessary to our national defense.

All Interests. "Thus far I have been urging government aid to American shipping, having in mind every interest of our producing population, whether of mine, factory, or farm, because expanding commerce is the foremost thought of every nation in the world today.

"I believe in government aid becomingly bestowed. We have aided industry through our tariffs; we have aided railway transportation in land grants and loans. We have aided construction of market roads and the improvement of inland waterways. We have aided reclamation and irrigation and the development of water power; we have loaned for seed grains in anticipation of harvest. We expended millions in investigation and experimentation to promote a common benefit, though a limited few are the direct beneficiaries. We have loaned hundreds of millions to promote the marketing of American goods. It has all been commendable and highly worth while.

Farmer Suffers. "At the present moment the American farmer is the chief sufferer from the cruel readjustments which follow war's inflation, and bedetting government aid to our farmers is highly essential to our national welfare. No people may safely boast a good fortune which the farmer does not share.

"Already this congress and the administrative branch of the government have given willing ear to the agricultural plea for post-war relief, and much has been done to help. It has proven helpful. Admittedly, it is not enough. Our credit systems, under government provision and control, must be promptly and safely readjusted to relieve our agricultural distress.

"To this problem and such others of pressing importance, as reasonably may be dealt with in the short session, I shall invite your attention at an early date.

Lack in Confidence. "I have chosen to confine myself to the specific problem of dealing with our merchant marine because I have asked you to assemble before me in advance the results of an appointed time to expedite its consideration. The executive branch of the government would feel itself permitted to contemplate our yearly loss and attending failure to accomplish 'unfinished business,' and the debt for your decision. More I would feel myself lack in confidence for America's future if I failed to stress the beckoning opportunity to equip the United States to assume a better place among the nations of the world whose commerce is inseparable from the good fortunes to which rightfully all peoples aspire.

Violinist Starts Action Against Former Employer

CHICAGO, Nov. 21.—(By U. P.)—Suit for \$100,000 for alleged slander has been brought against Clark A. Shaw, manager of the Chicago Civic Opera company, by Aurelio Fabiani, former first violinist for the company. Fabiani charges that Shaw circulated stories that he had tried to extort a \$5,000 bribe from Lois Ewell, opera singer, for which he is alleged to have guaranteed her a position with the company. Fabiani was discharged for his alleged offer to Miss Ewell.

Morgan is Reported in Best of Health

LONDON, Nov. 21.—(By U. P.)—J. P. Morgan, who has been reported ill at Watford, was in London today in the best of health, according to an announcement from the American financiers' offices here.



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Woman Seeks Judgeship



Miss Florence King, Chicago attorney, may become the first woman federal judge in the country. The Republican Woman's Club of Chicago has asked President Harding to appoint her to fill a vacancy in United States judgeship for the northern district of Illinois.

OLD WORLD DIMS AMERICA'S HOPE ON DEBT ISSUES

Only Seven Out of Twenty Countries Make Move to Pay Interest.

BY WILLIAM J. LOSH (U. P. Staff Correspondent.) "The year 1922, by U. P.) WASHINGTON, Nov. 21.—America's chances for obtaining quick action this winter on refunding of the debt owed her by foreign countries, aggregating over \$11,000,000,000, appeared dimmer here today as inquiry revealed that only seven out of twenty nations have made any actual moves toward establishing contact with the debt refunding commission.

Of 20 nations, beneficiaries of the American treasury during war years, only seven, according to the records of the commission, have made overtures looking toward refunding negotiations. These are England, France, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Italy and Poland.

The degree of their first response to American invitations to "come and talk it over" varies. The belief is held that the procrastination of foreign countries is occasioned not only by their inability to see their way toward paying even if the debts are refunded, but because in 1919 they were all informed that this country was willing to declare a three-year moratorium on payments pending refunding arrangements, if the countries would immediately enter such negotiations. Remains Valid.

The proposal was never acceded to, but the impression apparently prevailed that the three-year moratorium nevertheless remained valid. This expired in April of this year. England has tentatively named a commission to visit Washington and talk refunding and has recently paid the treasury \$100,000,000 on account of interest in interest.

France, during the past summer, named a delegate, M. Jean Parmentier, who conferred with the commission for a number of weeks. Parmentier was suddenly recalled to his home country, leaving behind him "unfinished business," and the debt refunding commission has no word of his return.

France, which maintains that payment of her debt is out of the question, is nevertheless paying to this country approximately \$21,000,000 annually in interest. Belgium has named a delegate to appear before the commission—Baron De Cartier, her ambassador to this country. De Cartier, how-

New Book for Home Builders

For the man of strictly moderate means who is planning a home, a new Portland Cement Association book—"Concrete Houses"—is now available. It contains twenty-six distinctive designs by leading architects, together with many interesting suggestions and new ideas on planning and building the ideal small home.

You will be interested in the variety of architectural style and the attractive use of space shown in these designs.

You will be surprised to see how beautiful a fire-safe, permanent concrete home can be. We will send this complete new book, "Concrete Houses," postpaid to you on receipt of 50c, money order or 2c stamps. Complete working drawings, specifications and material estimates are available at nominal cost for any of these houses you may be interested in, together with authoritative information on correct concrete construction.

PORTLAND CEMENT ASSOCIATION Merchants Bank Building INDIANAPOLIS, IND. 64 National Organization to Improve and Extend the Uses of Concrete Offices in 23 Other Cities

WOLSTEAD'S FOES RAP ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE WORKERS

Association Drafts Bill for Immediate Presentation to Congress.

ST. LOUIS, Mo., Nov. 21.—(By U. P.)—A fight for repeal of the Volstead Act and an attack at the Anti-Saloon League were launched at the opening session of the Association Opposed to the Prohibition Amendment, meeting here.

Two bills for immediate presentation to congress were drafted in the executive session of the association. One will provide that "all organizations which seek to effect legislation shall file in congress reports showing the sources of their income and the manner in which their funds are expended."

This measure was directed principally against the Anti-Saloon League. The second measure provides for: 1—Repeal of the 18th amendment. 2—Repeal of the Volstead act. 3—Delegation of the supervision of the liquor traffic to the states because of national enforcement of prohibition has proven a "failure and a scandal."

Women, seated in the gallery reserved for friends of senators started the applause which rapidly spread to the entire chamber.

GOVERNOR GRANTED CHANGE OF VENUE

OKMULGEE, OKLA., Nov. 21.—Gov. J. B. A. Robertson won his change of venue fight here today when Judge Thomas A. Edwards sustained the governor's motion that the Okmulgee county district court have no jurisdiction to hear further matters pertaining to his case in connection with his indictment on charges accepting a bribe to allow a state bank to operate. The bribery case will come up at Ada, Pontotoc county, tomorrow.

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Farmers Occupy Jury Box at Herrin Massacre Trial

MAHON, ILL., Nov. 21.—(By U. P.)—Hopes of obtaining a jury for the trial of five men accused of participating in the Herrin strike massacre, before the week end, were dim today. The questioning of veniremen continued slowly and showed little progress, with only one panel still in the box. Most of the venire now under examination are farmers. They showed great deliberation in answering questions, turning over in their mind questions as to whether they had an opinion of the lawfulness of the killing. Only five men were examined on Monday, without any addition to the number of men accepted.

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